

English 2

Narrative Writing – Perspectives

Instructional Unit Resource for the
*South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for
English Language Arts*

South Carolina Department of Education
Office of Standards and Learning
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English 2: Narrative Writing: Perspectives

Unit Rationale/Overview:

This unit focuses on the study of memoirs told through a variety of voices. Its purpose of this unit is to help students explore narrative writing as a component of literary nonfiction. Students will study the effect of author's craft on text, and ultimately write their own narratives. Teachers can construct this unit around one core text or several texts, which they will discuss in literature circles. To culminate this unit, students will write personal memoirs.

The Profile of the South Carolina Graduate (<http://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/File/newsroom/Profile-of-the-South-Carolina-Graduate.pdf>) addresses three areas of importance for all high school graduates: World Class Knowledge, World Class Skills, and Life and Career Characteristics. World Class Knowledge and some World Class Skills are typically taught in the educational setting, but Life and Career Characteristics, commonly called soft skills, are of equal importance. These skills and traits include integrity, self-direction, global perspective, perseverance, work ethic, and interpersonal skills. Without these qualities students will be unable to achieve their fullest potential. Students will hone interpersonal skills as specified in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate through reflection, peer editing, and whole class sharing. This unit can be especially poignant after classroom community has been carefully forged, and students are more comfortable expressing themselves honestly.

Estimated time frame: five weeks.

Standards and Indicators

Targeted implies that these standards are the focus of the unit.

Embedded implies that these standards will be naturally integrated throughout the units.

Targeted Standards/Indicators

Reading-Literary Text

E2.RL.8 Analyze characters, settings, events, and ideas as they develop and interact within particular context.

E2.RL.8.1 Analyze how characters or a series of ideas or events is introduced, connected, and developed within a particular context.

E2.RL.9 Interpret and analyze the author's use of words, phrases, and conventions, and how their relationships shape meaning and tone in print and multimedia texts.

E2.RL.9.1 Determine the figurative and connotative meanings of words and phrases; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

E2.RL.11 Analyze and provide evidence of how the author’s choice of point of view, perspective, and purpose shape content, meaning, and style.

E2.RL.11.1 Analyze and provide evidence of how the author’s choice of point of view, perspective, and purpose shape content, meaning, and style.

E2.RL.12 Analyze and critique how the author uses structures in print and multimedia texts to shape meaning and impact the reader.

E2.RL.12.1 Analyze how the relationships among structure, plot, and manipulation of time create the effects of mystery, tension, or surprise citing support from the text

E2.RL.12.2 Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within the text, and manipulate time create different effects.

Writing

E2.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences using effective techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

E2.W.3.1 Gather ideas from texts, multimedia, and personal experience to write narratives that:

- a. develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences;
- b. engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events;
- c. use narrative techniques of dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines to develop experiences, events, and/or characters;
- d. use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole;
- e. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting;
- f. use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters; and
- g. provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

Embedded Standards/Indicators

Reading-Literary Texts

E2.RL.5 Determine meaning and develop logical interpretations by making predictions, inferring, drawing conclusions, analyzing, synthesizing, providing evidence, and investigating multiple interpretations.

E2.RL.5.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text; identify multiple supported interpretations.
E2.RL.10	Apply a range of strategies to determine and deepen the meaning of known, unknown, and multiple-meaning words, phrases, jargon; acquire and use general academic and domain-specific vocabulary.
E2.RL.10.1	Use context clues to determine meanings of words and phrases.
E2.RL.13	Read independently and comprehend a variety of texts for the purposes of reading for enjoyment, acquiring new learning, and building stamina; reflect on and respond to increasingly complex text over time.
E2.RL.13.1	Engage in whole and small group reading with purpose and understanding.
Writing	
E2.W.4	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
E2.W.4.1	When writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. use parallel structure; b. use verb, noun, prepositional, and verbal phrases to communicate different meanings; c. use independent, dependent, noun, relative, and adverbial phrases and clauses to convey shades of meaning and variety; d. use parallel structures to communicate similar ideas; and e. use noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, and absolute phrases and independent, dependent, noun, relative, and adverbial clauses to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing.
E2.W.5	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
E2.W.5.2	Use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a semicolon or a conjunctive adverb to link two or more closely related independent clauses; b. a colon to introduce a list or quotation; and c. commas to separate adjacent, parallel structures.
E2.W.6	Write independently, legibly, and routinely for a variety of tasks, purposes, and audiences over short and extended time frames.
E2.6.1	Write routinely and persevere in writing tasks over short and extended time frames, for a range of domain-specific tasks, and for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Communication

E2.C.1 Interact with others to explore ideas and concepts, communicate meaning, and develop logical interpretations through collaborative conversations; build upon the ideas of others to clearly express one's own views while respecting diverse perspectives.

E2.C.1.1 Gather information from print and multimedia sources to prepare for discussions; draw on evidence that supports the topic, text, or issue being discussed; develop logical interpretations of new findings.

E2.C.1.2 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners; build on the ideas of others and express one's own ideas clearly and persuasively.

E2.C.1.3 Develop, apply, and adjust reciprocal communication skills and techniques with other students and adults.

E2.C.1.4 Engage in dialogue with peers and adults to explore meaning and interaction of ideas, concepts, and elements of text, reflecting, constructing, and articulating new understandings.

E2.C.1.5 Synthesize areas of agreement and disagreement including justification for personal perspective; revise conclusions based on new evidence.

E2.C.1.6 Utilize various modes of communication to present a clear, unique interpretation of diverse perspectives.

Clarifying Notes and "I Can" Statements

Clarifying Notes

- This unit is designed thematically to teach literary texts, informational texts, and a variety of other media while teaching informational/explanatory writing skills. Reading and writing strategies should be interwoven in order to build student competency.
- The Learning Target instructional strategies are suggestions and should not be considered prescriptive.
- Teachers should incorporate communication standards and indicators into daily lessons, discussions, and assessments.
- The instructional strategies listed are not to be taught in any particular order. They are arranged in order of their appearance in the "I Can" statements section.

"I Can" Statements

"I Can" statements are learning targets of what students need to know and accomplish as related to the standards/indicators.

- I can closely analyze the characters, settings, and events in a literary text. (E2.RL.8.1)
- I can closely interpret and analyze the impact an author's word choices have on meaning and tone. (E2.RL.9.1)
- I can provide evidence of how the author's perspective affects the meaning of literary text. (E2.RL.11.1)
- I can analyze the impact an author's structures on the text. (E2.RL.12.1; E2.RL.12.2)
- I can create narratives to develop real or imagined experiences using effective techniques, details, and appropriate structures. (E2.W.3.1)

Essential Questions
<p>These are suggested essential questions that will help guide student inquiry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do memoirs help us make sense of our lives? • How do writers use reflection to make sense of prior experiences? • What is truth and how can it be manipulated? • How does an understanding of author’s purpose and choice of techniques help the reader gather meaning from text?
Academic Vocabulary
<p>Some students may need extra support with academic vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary in an instructional context is recommended rather than teaching in isolation. An appropriate time to deliver explicit instruction is during the modeling process.</p> <p>context dialogue point of view perspective memoir narratives sensory language</p>
Prior Knowledge
<p>Prior to this unit, students will need experience with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transacting with texts to formulate questions, considering alternative views and multiple perspectives, synthesizing information, and reflecting throughout the learning process; • summarizing, interpreting, and analyzing both literary and informational texts; • writing narrative informative/explanatory texts; and • interacting with others.
Subsequent Knowledge
<p>In English 3, students will be asked to expand upon concepts and skills learned in English 2. They will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze how characters, ideas, or events interact within a particular context; • analyze author’s craft for language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful; • analyze how an author’s perspective supports rhetorical or aesthetic purposes and conveys cultural experiences; • analyze how meaning is derived from the relationships among structure, plot, and manipulation of time; • establish one or more point(s) of view; • introduce a narrator and/or characters;

- use narrative techniques of dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters; and
- use a variety of techniques to sequence events to build on one another and build toward a particular tone or outcome.

Potential Instructional Strategies

Instructional Strategy: Follow the Characters

Learning Target: I can closely analyze the characters, settings, and events in a literary text. (E2.RL.8.1)

This strategy will help students understand literature through character analysis. Students will analyze the characters in the texts they are reading.

Students will organize information about characters by asking themselves:

- What does the character do?
- What do other characters do or say about them?
- What does the character say or think?
- How is the character involved in conflict?
- How does the character change?

Further Learning: Students can assume the voice of a character in the literary work and write a letter to another character or develop a social media account depicting that character's thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Instructional Strategy: Six Word Memoir

Learning Target: I can closely interpret and analyze the impact an author's word choices have on meaning and tone. (E2.RL.9.1)

- It is important that students have a strong understanding of word choice, mood, and tone. If needed, review the difference between mood and tone with students and the impact word choice has on each.
- Discuss "life stories" with students. Have students come up with a working definition of memoir.
- Project the six word memoir by Ernest Hemingway for all students to see and discuss. (For sale. Baby shoes. Never used.) Lead students in a whole class discussion about possible meaning, word choice, tone, etc.
- Supply students with several examples of six word memoirs. These can be printed on individual colored paper, and students can participate in a gallery walk to examine the memoirs, discuss meaning, and analyze word choice. Sample memoirs can be found here: <http://www.sixwordmemoirs.com/>. Choose carefully for age appropriate examples that will

elicit some discussion.

- After discussing several of the memoirs, have students write their own life stories, using only six words.

Publication Idea: Allow students to write their six word memoirs on bulletin board paper, butcher paper or sentence strips and display them.

Lesson Citation: <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/exploring-power-language-with-30701.html?tab=4#tabs>

Instructional Strategy: Close Reading with Text Dependent Analysis Questions

Learning Target: I can provide evidence of how the author's perspective affects the meaning of literary text. (E2.RL.11.1)

- Choose an age-appropriate short memoir text for students to examine.
- The steps for close reading are as follows:
 - a. Before Reading:** number the paragraphs (this step enables students to refer to specific paragraphs when discussing the text)
 - b. During Reading:**
 - Chunk the text -- group paragraphs together into large, but manageable chunks of text
 - Underline and circle -- give students specific instructions on what to look for; instructions will vary, depending on the purpose of the close reading (see question stems below for possible examples).
 - c. After Reading:**
 - Summarize -- in the left margin for each chunk, students should write short summaries
 - Dig Deeper -- in the right margin for each chunk, students should activate cognitive reading strategies (connect, question, predict, etc.)

Assessment: Students analyze the author's perspective using text dependent analysis questions.

Possible question stems may include:

- What words or phrases grab your attention? What words or phrases tug at your heart?
- What beautiful language does the author use?
- What words (color, size, shape, material, and proper names) help the author be specific?
- What strong verbs do you notice? How do they help you visualize the author's meaning?
- How does the author's point of view advance the author's belief?

- What does the author want us to know about ____?
- What is the author's message to his/her readers?
- What ideas in the text support/validate ____?

Further Learning: Students can continue to work with author's perspective by rewriting some of their own pieces in a different point of view. They can then reflect on how their own story changes when it is told through the eyes of someone else.

Lesson Citation: <http://www.fsusd.org/Page/8778>

Instructional Strategy: Recipe for a Memoir

Learning Target: I can analyze the impact an author's structure has on the text. (E2.RL.12.1; E2.RL.12.2)

- A. Students will need to start with a close reading of a short memoir text. Remind them of the following steps for close reading and have them focus on the genre and the choices the author makes:
 - Comment on the format of the piece?
 - Number the paragraphs.
 - Group paragraphs together into chunks.
 - Underline key details. Circle unknown words.
 - Summarize each chunk in the left margin.
 - Make notes about the genre and the author's craft in the right margin.
- B. Share with students the characteristics of a memoir:
 - It gives a detailed description of a brief period of time or series of related events from the past.
 - It is structured as a narrative and includes many of the usual elements of storytelling, such as setting, plot, imagery, conflict, characterization, etc.
 - It is written in first person point of view.
 - It tells a true story that has a fictional quality.
 - It focuses and reflects on the relationship between the writer and a particular person, place, animal, or object
 - It explains the significance of the relationship.
 - It reveals the feelings of the writer
 - It shows what the author learned from the experience.
 - It emphasizes the more personal aspects of the author's experience, rather than focusing on the event itself.

- It leaves the reader with a strong impression of the subject of the memoir.

C. Students will work in small collaborative groups to create a recipe for a memoir. They will use their mentor text/close reading and the list of characteristics to create a creative set of instructions for this type of writing.

Further Learning: Students can prepare a poster to present the structure of their memoir to the class. Presentations may be done as a whole class or using a gallery walk.

Lesson Citation: http://www.smoran.ednet.ns.ca/writing/characteristics_of_the_memoir.htm

Instructional Strategy: Memoir Writing

Learning Target: I can create narratives to develop real or imagined experiences, using effective techniques, details, and appropriate structures. (E2.W.3.1)

Students will produce a final piece of writing that reflects a brief moment from their own lives.

- Final product assignment: Reflect on events from your lifetime and write a memoir that reveals something meaningful. Your memoir should be focused on, but not limited to, the actual event, other events on the same day, and the lesson you learned. This piece is to be written as a narrative that incorporates the characteristics of a memoir.

The following writing strategies and activities will help scaffold the memoir writing process:

A. Memoir Tweets

- Students will practice writing brief memoirs using the format used on Twitter
- Tweets should be no more than 140 characters (including spaces)

B. My Favorite Mistake

- Students will start with a mentor text (suggested text: “A Mistake that Should Last a Lifetime” by Jessanne Collins, http://www.salon.com/2008/02/13/removable_tattoo_ink/)
- Students should do a close reading that focuses on places where the author recalls the incident and places where she reflects on what the incident means to her today
- Have students brainstorm about personal mistakes that have had a positive impact on their lives.
- Create a two column chart to both express and reflect on their mistakes.
- See example below:

<i>What was my favorite mistake?</i>	
Expression -- Details surrounding the mistake	Reflection -- What can you take from the experience? What you could learn today?

- Students will use the chart and brainstorm a writing prompt for their own brief piece about a mistake.

C. Showing Not Telling

- Have students practice working on creating concrete details in their writing to make the memoir more realistic.
- Discuss the following example with students:

The student walked into the room and sat down.	Bobby shuffled into class and slumped into his seat. Before he was even settled, he stretched his arms, tilted his head back and let out a weary yawn that sounded like the roar of a tired lion. As the teacher began to drone on about photosynthesis, Bobby yawned again but louder this time. Both students sitting next to him stopped taking notes and frowned at him disdainfully.
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- Give students or groups of students sentence prompts to practice improving their own writing. Possible prompts could include:
 1. The kid was weird.
 2. She looked nervous.
 3. The party was fun.
- Have students find sentences in their own writing to improve by using the Showing Not Telling technique.

Production Idea: Have students share the results of their revision, using Showing Not Telling by presenting the before and after sentences in small groups or on chart paper.

D. A Family Photo

- Have students bring in a family photo.
- As they look at the photos, have them brainstorm about possible writing topics suggested by their memories.

Further Learning: Any of these writing activities can be turned into a final piece, but the emphasis should be on creating the memoir.

Production Ideas: If students are willing, compile memoirs into a class anthology. Students may be sharing intimate details of their lives, so remember that some students may not be willing to share with the whole class. You may have students share their memoirs in a Socratic seminar-type discussion, or you may opt for small group share only.

Lesson Citation: Many of these mini-lessons come from books written by Kelly Gallagher, but resources are also online. The following books may help plan a writing unit:

- *Write Like This: Teaching Real-World Writing Through Modeling and Mentor Texts* by Kelly Gallagher
- *Teaching Adolescent Writers* by Kelly Gallagher

Note: These mini-lessons also help students with reading and writing memoir texts:

- **Follow the Characters:** During the course of a novel/literature unit, students will begin a deep analysis of a character by putting themselves “into the character’s shoes.” This activity will allow the students to consider the internal lives of the characters, and based on this perspective, interact with the other characters in accordance with what they know. Each student is randomly assigned a character to “follow” throughout the text. Other activities correlate well with this empathetic approach to character analysis. One such activity is Letter Writing: students write letters to other students’ characters in which they describe their own characters’ thoughts and feelings about key events and conflicts as they unfold.
- **Fishbowl Discussions:** Have table discussions in which each “character” is given an opportunity to respond to a question or issue raised by a mediator. This activity helps the student think meta-cognitively about the personality of the character and connect it to an applicable issue or theme. For more information on Fishbowl Discussions, click here.
<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/fishbowl>
- **Write the Missing Scene:** The student writes a scene that was “left out” of the novel (i.e. a scene that the student feels should be in story) that reflects the personality of the character as the student understands him or her to be, citing textual evidence (specific words the author used) as they write. (from http://www.isbe.net/common_core/pdf/ela-teach-strat-read-lit-6-12.pdf)

Potential Assessment Tasks

Students analyze the author's perspective, using text dependent analysis questions. (E2.RL.11.1)

Possible question stems may include:

- What words or phrases grab your attention? What words or phrases tug at your heart?
- What beautiful language does the author use?
- What words (color, size, shape, material, and proper names) help the author be specific?
- What strong verbs do you notice? How do they help you visualize the author's meaning?
- How does the author's point of view advance the author's belief?
- What does the author want us to know about ____?
- What is the author's message to his/her readers?
- What ideas in the text support/validate ____?

Students should write their own memoir as a summative assessment. (E2.W.3.1)

The following rubric may be used as a scoring guide:

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson998/rubric.pdf

Resources

Full-Length Memoirs

- *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom
- *Between a Rock and a Hard Place* by Aron Ralston
- *I've Got Things to Do with my Life* by Mike Towle
- *The Color of Water* by James McBride
- *Night* by Elie Weisel
- *Hole in My Life* by Jack Gantos
- *I Never Had it Made* by Jackie Robinson
- *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Baeh
- *Bad Boy: A Memoir* by Walter Dean Myers
- *King of the Mild Frontier* by Chris Crutcher

Short Memoirs

Excerpts from The Pat Conroy Cookbook

“Countdown” from *The New Yorker*

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2005/04/18/countdown-3>

Supplementary Texts

- “Fish Cheeks” by Amy Tan
- *October Sky* (film)
- “It’s My Life” by Bon Jovi (song)
- “My Favorite Mistake” by Sheryl Crowe (song)
- Excerpt from *Me Talk Pretty One Day* by David Sedaris
http://betterlesson.com/lesson/resource/2306964/me-talk-pretty-one-day-by-sedaris-pdf?from=lessonsection_narrative
- Teen Memoirs on a Variety of Topics
<https://www.teenink.com/nonfiction/memoir/>

Additional memoir resources:

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/writeit/memoir/>

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/family-memoir-getting-acquainted-998.html?tab=1#tabs>

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/making-revising-memoirs-detecting-31031.html>

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/exploring-sharing-family-stories-805.html>

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